

We claim

1. A method for identifying plant genetic material whose actions cause increased production of a metabolite or metabolites of interest in plant cells, said method comprising:

- a) causing random integration into the plant genome in plant protoplasts of at least one enhancer-containing T-DNA genetic element harboring sequences to enable bacterial replication and selection;
- b) growing said protoplasts to the stage of callus cultures;
- c) sampling said callus cultures in such a manner as to retain viability of said clonal cultures;
- d) analyzing said samples to identify the callus cultures producing the metabolite or metabolites of interest; and
- e) isolating and identifying the plant genetic material, the action of which has been stimulated by the enhancer-containing T-DNA genetic element in the sampled, identified callus cultures.

2. A method of claim 1, wherein the plant genetic material which is identified is a plant gene whose action causes a plant cell to produce an increased amount of a metabolite or metabolites of interest.

3. A method of claim 2, wherein the plant genetic material which is identified is a regulatory gene.

10045677.011502

4. A method of claim 1, wherein the analysis of callus cultures detects the production of metabolites of interest having pharmacological properties.
5. A method of claim 4, wherein said metabolites are detected via at least one radioligand displacement assay.
6. A method of claim 1, which comprises the further step of propagating at least one callus culture producing said metabolite or metabolites.
7. A method of claim 1, wherein said plant is a tobacco plant.
8. A method of claim 1, wherein said enhancer sequence is a plant viral enhancer sequence.
9. A method of claim 8, wherein said enhancer sequence is delivered to the plant via *Agrobacterium tumefaciens*.
10. A method of claim 5, wherein said radioligand is a nicotinic acetylcholine agonist.
11. A method of claim 5, wherein said radioligand is a nicotinic acetylcholine antagonist.
12. A method of claim 5, wherein said radioligand is ^3H -epibatidine.

10045677-01502

13. A method of claim 5, wherein said radioligand is ^3H -methyllycaconitine.

14. A method for detecting a gene product in a plant comprising;

a) causing integration of at least one enhancer-containing T-DNA in a plant protoplast;

b) growing said protoplast to the stage of callus culture;

c) sampling said callus in such a manner so as to retain viability of said callus culture;

d) detecting a metabolite of interest in the event that the metabolite of interest is present.

15. A method of claim 14, wherein a metabolite of interest is detected.

16. A method of claim 15, wherein said metabolite is detected with at least one radiolabeled ligand binding assay.

17. A method of claim 15, which further comprises the step of propagating at least one daughter culture.

18. A method of claim 14, wherein said plant is a tobacco plant.

19. A method of claim 14, wherein said enhancer sequence is a plant viral enhancer sequence.

20. A method of claim 18, wherein said enhancer sequence is contained within *Agrobacterium tumefaciens*.

21. A method of claim 17, wherein said radiolabeled ligand is selected from the group consisting of nicotinic acetylcholine agonists.

22. A method of claim 17 wherein said radiolabeled ligand is selected from the group consisting of nicotinic acetylcholine antagonists.

23. A method of claim 17, wherein said radiolabeled ligand binds nicotinic Acetylcholine receptors.

24. A method of claim 18, wherein said radiolabeled ligand is ³H-epibatidine.

25. A method for detecting a product of secondary metabolism in plants comprising:

- a) co-cultivating protoplasts with *Agrobacterial* cells harboring an activation-tagging vector;
- b) embedding the protoplasts in agarose;
- c) transferring the protoplasts to a larger surface area to allow further growth to form calli tissue;
- d) excising individual calli tissue;
- e) partially macerating individual calli tissue in multi-welled microtitre plate whereby liquid supernatant is formed;
- f) removing the liquid supernatant;

g) analyzing the liquid supernatant for the product of secondary metabolism; and

h) optionally adding growth medium to tissues remaining in the microtitre plate.

2025.10.24.15.00